

08/441,355

ABSTRACT

A family of cDNA sequences derived from
5 hepatitis C virus (HCV) are provided. These sequences
encode antigens which react immunologically with antibodies
present in individuals with non-A non-B hepatitis
(NANBH), but which are absent from individuals infected
with hepatitis A virus, or hepatitis B virus, and also are
10 absent in control individuals. The HCV cDNA sequences
lack substantial homology to the sequences of hepatitis
delta virus (HDV) and HBV. A comparison of the sequences
of amino acids encoded in the HCV cDNA with the sequences
of Flaviviruses indicates that HCV may be related to the
15 Flaviviruses.

The HCV cDNA sequences and the polypeptides
encoded therein are useful as reagents for the detection
and therapy of HCV. The reagents provided in the invention
are also useful for the isolation of NANBH agent(s),
20 for the propagation of these agents in tissue culture, and
for the screening of antiviral agents for HCV.

25

30

35